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Disney's Cinderella Under Cover: Heads, Butts, Toes, and Gender Woes

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Walt Disney's Cinderella demonstrates that popular animated cartoons can employ humor to convey cultural messages more clearly, more emphatically--and more subtly--than standard Hollywood fare. Not only can artists easily exaggerate physical settings and characters' bodies, but they can also distort how bodies move and interact with each other and their environment. Thus meaning is dramatized nonverbally in an array of comic devices, and cultural communication can occur "under cover."[1] In Disney's Cinderella, released in 1950, exaggeration provided gender lessons for children of the post-World War II era, particularly for girls. The filmmakers combined the technique of exaggeration common in animated films of the 1930s and 40s (a technique evident in most of the film's characterizations) with the post-war yearning for normality, embodied by Cinderella and her dream.[2] They thus crafted a film that offers viewers clear directional signals concerning what is and what is not acceptable gender behavior, while cloaking their conception in a seemingly innocuous format.

Like many films of the 1950s, Cinderella champions the joys of returning to social "normality," the "mom and apple pie" lifestyle whose desirability was only heightened by the disruption of the war. In contrast to Snow White (1936), which has some important forest scenes, Cinderella is almost exclusively an indoor, "home" movie, focusing on the heroine's ability to remain sweet, obedient, and dutiful in her daily chores while under duress, for which she is rewarded with the grand prize, an adoring husband (with the implied expectation of children) and economic

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ease.[3] Such contentment is far from the 1930s world of the early Mickey Mouse that Water Benjamin analyzed. Benjamin saw the excessively frenetic quality of Mickey Mouse as an embodiment of human frustration in a technological age, with the resulting laughter providing viewers with a means of coping with that modern world (377).[4] Disney's Cinderella is the opposite of the early Mickey Mouse: she embodies a desirable, enviable "ideal" of female restraint in a generally positive yet constraining world; her selfishness bursts out chiefly within prescribed limits. Cinderella achieves this ideal state largely through contrast with the more traditional, exaggerated cartoon figures.

Cinderella herself is not highly exaggerated, nor is she portrayed as laughable. The film encourages the audience to laugh at other bodies that are unlike the norm embodied by Cinderella, bodies belonging to characters who are not involved in heterosexual, monogamous relationships. Numerous humor theorists have noted that humor, as a social institution, can work to define who is an outsider; in Cinderella, exaggeration provides much of this kind of humor and functions as a didactic tool to modify behavior.[5] Cinderella fits into this pedagogical mode by functioning as a "corrective," often linking comedy, exaggeration, and "inappropriate" gender behavior, while unexaggerated bodies provide the "norm."

In Disney's Cinderella, exaggerated extremities draw the viewer's attention to the bodies of characters like the evil stepsisters and stepmother, the King and the Grand Duke, the boy mice, and Lucifer the cat. Big feet, bulbous noses, large quantities of various body hair, and enormous behinds make overt the animal nature of those possessing such exaggerated features and concomitantly suggest that because these features are physically uncontained, their owner's sexuality is overly physical, deviant, and transgressive.[6] In contrast, the film highlights Cinderella's innocent sexuality by minimizing her extremities

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and by allowing the audience only peeps at them. The juxtaposition of exaggeration and overtness with limitation and covertness relegates the viewer to the position of voyeur in regard to Cinderella but not in regard to the other characters. And so the film presents the ideal female as one who physically projects a tantalizing mix of sexuality and innocence.[7]

Cinderella's feet demonstrate her containment and attendant lack of comic or grotesque exaggeration. Her feet are the body parts that reveals her true identity as a sexually desirable yet unobtrusive female. Cinderella has the most famous tiny feet in Western culture, yet the audience hardly gets to see them. While my interpretation of Cinderella's feet diverges from Freud's view of female foot as phallus, women's feet do convey female sexuality in this film. Cinderella never leaves her diminutive feet uncovered. Her feet are shy and impossibly sleek: they have no toes. Her shoes await her feet as soon as she rises from bed, and she slips into them for only a few dance steps before she removes them for her sponge shower. The viewer, however, does get a brief close-up of those toeless tootsies before they are sheathed.[8] Again we see them in close-up after Cinderella's shower as they once again immediately slip into shoes. Soon after, the film provides a preview of the famous lost slipper episode as Cinderella loses a shoe while climbing the stairs at home; however, she quickly turns around and replaces it.

The glass slipper provides a fitting climax to this now-we-see-it, now-we-don't approach, since, in a way, both happen at once: the glass slipper scenes remind me of Marabel Morgan's recommendation that women wear cellophane to please their husbands, since the appearance of clothing exists without the visual blockage. Madonna Kolbenschlag also notes the sexual symbolism of the glass slipper, linking it with sexual imprisonment. Yet Cinderella's sexual innocence is maintained, for the queen-to-be seems unaware of the revelatory quality of her shoes, nor does she choose the revealing slippers for herself. They are, of course, a

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magical gift from her fairy godmother, who sends her "child" off to the ball in search of her true love (and marriage).

The audience does not get a good view of Cinderella's slippered foot until after her romantic encounter with the Prince at the ball. Cinderella loses one slipper on the staircase leaving the palace, but we must wait to see her feet until the spell breaks and the King's posse passes by. Then there is time for Cinderella's loving description of the Prince (whose identity is unknown to Cinderella as hers is to him), and finally for a lingering shot of Cinderella's two feet, one naked and still, one sparkling, under glass and then lifted to remove the slipper. Again we see a close-up of Cinderella's glass-enclosed foot in the revelation scene, when the Grand Duke easily slips on the symbol of Cinderella's "true" identity. The audience significantly does not get to see these lingering shots of Cinderella's feet until she is about to become a bride, a condition repeatedly linked to sexuality--and particularly to motherhood--by the King's clamoring for grandchildren. Even then the scenes are brief. The film emphasizes this link as the close-up of Cinderella's slippered foot in the revelation scene dissolves into peeling wedding bells, so that a superimposition occurs. Curiously, in the final shoe scene in the movie, when the new bride loses her shoe while leaving the church, the King replaces it for her, but there is no close-up as in other scenes when one or both of Cinderella's feet are naked. By this time, Cinderella's feet are too sexually charged for her father-in-law to be seen with one of them in his hand. In fact, a light kiss on his head from Cinderella after he slips on the shoe makes him turn beet red. Cinderella, however, appears oblivious to the sexual implications of the scene. As Bruno Bettelheim notes, "[i]n most 'Cinderella' stories . . . Cinderella's innocence is stressed" even in sexual situations (246). The King is not alone in his awareness of Cinderella's sexuality; the film makes its Cinderella watchers in the audience and on screen--and all characters in the film are Cinderella

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watchers--complicit in this awareness.

In contrast to the heroine's tiny feet being occasionally shown but quickly hidden or placed in glass, most other characters have laughably big and sometimes bare feet. The two step-sisters, Anastasia and Drizella, provide obvious counters: their exaggerated feet, shown naked much more than Cinderella's, overtly emphasize their physical nature, underscoring Julius Heuscher's point that, unlike Cinderella, they are "corrupted by the selfishness of physical desires" (208). They are reverse images of Cinderella and provide negative visual as well as verbal cues for young film audiences. When the viewer first sees them as grown-ups, they plunge out of bed barefooted and they walk--or rather galumph--though the hall on their big, naked feet. In another scene, their mother pulls the blanket from the bed to reveal their gigantic extremities. Not only are their feet enormous, but they also have huge toes. Their feet are more akin to the large paws of Bruno the hound dog than to the stylized feet of their stepsister. The awkward sisters' attempts to make the sparkling symbol of Cinderella's covert sexuality fit on their huge feet provide a hefty portion of the film's slapstick comedy. By pounding and pulling or under cover of a long dress, both sisters briefly appear to make the shoe fit. Yet the truth of their big feet, like their excessively physical natures, can't be contained: Anastasia's dress lifted back reveals that only her toes fit the slipper, and Drizella's dramatically bent foot catapults the slipper into the air. The comedy of the stepsisters' huge feet in action is echoed--with a scary undertone--in the scene featuring the film's other group of maleless females, the hens, whoe enormous feet and voracious appetites temporily overwhelm Gus the mouse.

In addition to the opposition set up between the depiction of Cinderella's feet and the portrayal of her stepsisters' and the hen's feet, similar comparisons occur with other extremities, such as fingers. Cinderella's fingers are small and viewers only catch a glimpse of a few

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fingernails in close-ups. Drizella's and Anastasia's hands are big and clumsy. Our first view of Anastasia shows her as a child rubbing a long finger under a ball-like nose, a nose much like that of Lucifer the cat, the evil stepmother's pet. She later gets a finger caught in a flute stop--perhaps a Freudian comment on her "masculine" aggressiveness. Males involved in homosocial, rather than heterosexual, relationships, also have exaggerated extremities. The Grand Duke, who has an intense homosocial relationship with the King--they bounce in bed together and do a few dance steps--also has fingers as large as Cinderella's glass slipper, while the King (once married but now a bachelor[9]) possesses huge, fat hands. (As in many classic comic duos, an extreme also occurs through a comparison of the pair's overall body types, the Grand Duke being tall and thin, the King short and fat.)

Cinderella's stepmother, an exaggerated, terrifying figure, also has long, bony fingers with nails clearly defined in close-ups, which link her anatomically to the only other character with emphasized nails, Lucifer the cat, who is also her bedmate. A selfish, angry, jealous woman, devoted to wealth and status, the stepmother brings an aspect of film noir into the narrative. Her rapacious sexuality is implied by the early deaths of her two husbands. She represents the anti-family, insufficiently contained force of the female that needs to be conquered. Most of her interactions with her family are commands. Her link to the evil male feline (not only though their nails but through hair coloring and emphasized lower teeth)--and the implicit gender bending associated with this male/female merging, again contrasts with Cinderella's clear femininity and her limited animality, which is seen only in glimpses rather than overtly.

Given that the plot highlights the role of a small slipper, it is not surprising that the film emphasizes comic extremities, such as fingers and toes. What is particularly striking is the attention given to various and

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sundry behinds, a pattern which clearly indicates the emphasis placed on Cinderella's containment--her being under cover. Again, Cinderella is not over-endowed with this extremity, but as with her breasts, her bottom is not so small as to be funny.[10] (The stepsisters have nonexistent breasts, for example--and so the lack is excessive.) As with her feet, suggestiveness is the key regarding Cinderella's behind. A bird uses it as a perch in her awakening scene, but it does not stick up very high and it is under a blanket.

Rear views of Cinderella's graceful behind are common in the film, and we often are given a particular character's perspective for these views. Notably, rear shots of long duration are from the perspective of either the evil stepmother or her alter-ego in the film, Lucifer the cat. As Cinderella carries breakfast trays upstairs, we get a low-angle view of her that emphasizes her legs as well as her bottom from the perspective of Lucifer. When the future princess is on her knees scrubbing, we first see her from behind, again sharing Lucifer's perspective. Her clothes outline both her rear and her legs. At the ball, we see Cinderella waltzing in circles from the perspective of the King and Grand Duke, as well as the stepsisters and stepmother. The following morning, however, after Cinderella learns that the Prince wants to marry her, we see her waltzing from behind, the perspective being that of the narrowed, calculating eyes of her stepmother, a woman clearly envious of Cinderella's attractiveness. Through the stepmother's eyes, the viewer sees that the bow on Cinderella's apron flowing back and forth gently accentuates the movement of her posterior as she dances through a doorway. The audience then sees a close up of the stepmother's face as the background goes dark--and her eyes glow like Lucifer's had in the darkness of his mistress's bedroom. Cinderella, of course, remains innocently unaware of this.

The subtle emphasis on Cinderella's bottom in all these scenes is

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enhanced by the exaggerated emphasis on behinds throughout the film. Again the stepsisters provide a ready contrast. The huge bobbing bustles the sisters wear to the ball amplify their already established physical grotesqueness. Their bustles bounce wildly as they dance together before leaving home, supposedly mocking an imagined dance between Cinderella and the Prince, but in actuality mocking their own lack of sexual "normality." True, the pretty women at the ball whom the Prince rejects also wear bustles (and one wears a dress with a dark "V" in front, pointing to her genitals), but their outfits are not so exaggerated so as to proclaim physicality like the stepsisters' do. Drizella and Anastasia's bustles are so big that they facilitate the clumsy women's bouncing their bottoms together just before the young women are presented to the Prince. The first time we see Cinderella from the Prince's perspective, she is framed by the twisted faces and big bottoms of her stepsisters. The Prince (and the viewer) sees Cinderella slowly turn around, unannounced, undefined, and unsure of what to do, before he walks between the eager, rejected big bottoms toward his future bride. The perspective then becomes that of the King and Grand Duke who watch the Prince approach Cinderella from behind and to the side before he asks her to dance. The disparity intensifies as the stepsisters anxiously try to get a look at their unrecognized stepsister, their rear portions bouncing comically as Anastasia bends over to look between a man's legs, a view partly obstructed by his sheathed sword, emphasizing the covert sexuality of the dance.

The same comic exaggeration occurs the next day as Drizella and then Anastasia are awakened by their mother. Drizella comes to her sister's room scratching her behind and asking her mother what's going on before crawling into bed with her sister, underscoring the fact that the two lack heterosexual relationships--and echoing the Duke's bed scene with the King. Seeing no point in getting up since the Prince is not

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searching for them, the rejected women bury their heads under their pillows and their rears, unlike Cinderella's in her awakening scene, stick way up, a situation emphasized when their mother pulls off the covers to reveal their huge, only slightly covered posteriors. As they primp before a mirror in preparation for the Grand Duke, they bump behinds to get a better look at themselves. The grotesqueness of the sisters' homosocial physicality is emphasized by the film score which mimics the bumps--by a technique actually called "cartooning."

While the stepsisters' large, overtly physical bouncing behinds furnish the clearest foils to Cinderella's, bottoms not only bound but abound in the film. Many characters, all without heterosexual mates, have unruly butts that need to be pulled up to or over a surface by someone other than their owners. Gus the mouse, Bruno the dog, and the King (whose round build mirrors Gus's) all need to get hauled up by their tails. Lucifer the cat uses his behind as a weapon in his war with the forces of good--the mice and Cinderella--as he settles his butt on a set of beads the mice want for Cinderella's ball outfit. Also, Lucifer is so slow in leaving his mistress's bedroom for breakfast that Cinderella, in one of her few minor rebellions against the containment of her emotions, closes the door on his rear end. The King also provides a counter to Cinderella in the scene when he happily leaves the ball; the viewer sees him dancing from behind, first alone and then taking a guard for a twirl before dancing through the door solo. The perspective is very similar to the later rear view of Cinderella dancing alone through a door as she's watched by her stepmother, but the King's behind is large and in active bouncing motion, rather than similar to Cinderella's gentle swaying one. The King's same active motion occurs later the night of the ball when the man dreams of playing horsey with an imagined grandson and granddaughter, the latter bouncing up and down on his bouncing behind.

While the King does not provide a male role model for the

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audience, his body shape and motion soften his potent, and occasionally violent, authority. Thus we can laugh at him, but not the stepmother. The King's body is much like that of the later Mickey Mouse, with a large head and short legs. As Stephen Jay Gould has pointed out, Mickey's body is transformed into that of a non-threatening child. Drawings which give the appearance of high camera angles reinforce his non-threatening quality, a technique also used with the fairy godmother, who, like the King, is also short and heavy, but not to the same extent. (In contrast, the film usually depicts the stepmother from a low-angle.)

Another way the King provides a humorous exaggeration to counter Cinderella is by means of head hair, a physical aspect traditionally linked with sexuality. The top of the King's head absolutely lacks hair, but he, like the Grand Duke, sports a huge mustache. Other characters provide similar excesses, and they all lack heterosexual mates. Anastasia and Drizella have big, fat curls. Their mother has great masses of the stuff worn up on her head and streaked to evoke the coloring of a skunk. When the fairy godmother's magic swirls move Cinderella's hair to the top of her head for the ball (creating a brief magic halo and covering her ears--which rarely and barely show at other times), the quantity can't compare with her stepmother's.

The mice, too, have spiky, tousled head hair, and while they are depicted as positive characters, this uncontained quality does translate into a gender lesson. While some female mice do live in Cinderella's house, a large part of the film is devoted to the escapades of a gang of male mice. Unlike the mated birds (who, when anthropomorphized, wear hats over their head feathers), the mice do not function in heterosexual pairs. They seem boy-like, rather than adult, and while heterosexual romance does not come into their own lives, the audience does see their positive, dreamy response to Cinderella's talk about the Prince (an unexaggerated, heterosexual male). In fact, while listening to Cinderella

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after the ball and after the magic wears off, the two featured mice, Jack and Gus, start to cuddle, Gus winding his leg around Jack's. Jack soon realizes what's happening, however, and briefly registers shock and disgust as he separates himself. As a post-war role model, Cinderella has no homosexual tendencies, and even her heterosexuality is not intense.

Analyzing when Cinderella's hair is down, as opposed to being up, braided, or tied back with a ribbon or a kerchief, leads to a fuller awareness of how the film's depiction of Cinderella's extremities makes the audience members into voyeurs, while maintaining Cinderella's minimal awareness of herself as a sexual female. (Cinderella does brush her hair in the morning and before the Duke arrives, and she straightens her hair while looking at her reflection in a bubble, but we never see her image in a mirror, as we do with the stepsisters' and stepmother's. For those viewers who have seen Snow White's stepmother gazing at her reflection, the symbolic value of a mirror is more powerful.) The first time Cinderella's hair is down, she does the deed herself, innocently undoing her braids before she takes her shower. The audience knows that Cinderella's shower constitutes a gender secret, since a female mouse shoos out all the male mice before Cinderella undresses behind a screen, throwing up her nightgown for the female birds to carry off. Although the female birds are involved in this homosocial physical relationship with Cinderella, they are the least exaggerated animals in the film, probably due to their emphatically heterosexual and family-centered natures. (Nests figure prominently in many scenes with birds, particularly in the scene immediately preceding the audience's first view of the grown Cinderella.) The shower scene becomes more voyeuristic as birds wring out a spongeful of water and Cinderella leaps up and turns slightly to the side, almost revealing a breast before her torso settles back behind the screen.

A scene of similar voyeuristic import occurs the next time we see

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Cinderella's hair down, after Drizella and Anastasia partly strip her at their mother's instigation. The violence here is akin to a rape. The stepsisters rip off the beads and sash they had earlier discarded and continue to strip Cinderella of her pink and white dress until they are gently "rebuked" by their satisfied mother. We see this scene both from the stepsisters' and Cinderella's perspectives, as the audience is positioned both to be Cinderella and to be watching Cinderella at the mercy of a threatening, uncontained female physical force.

Through no fault of her own, the future princess is left with her hair down, one shoulder bare, her calves uncovered, and the pink dress material torn from one hip, revealing flesh-colored material underneath--a curious transformation, since the material had been white and it soon reverts to being white. The audience then sees Cinderella scantily clad throughout the transformation scene and also after the magic wears off after midnight.

The structure of the transformation segment enhances the audience's awareness of Cinderella's body. Throughout numerous transformations (pumpkin, mice, horse, and hound), the kind-hearted fairy godmother sees Cinderella as a good child rather than in physical terms, and so she doesn't notice Cinderella's partly stripped status--but the audience does. Each time the jovial fairy announces a new transformation, Cinderella expectantly fingers her dress. When the transformation does occur, Cinderella is again at the mercy of the transforming agent. Though the fairy's magic represents positive change, rather than the stepsisters' negative, stripping force, Cinderella is still passive, her body limp as a rag doll's while we watch her fairy godmother create a "daring" look--modulated by the halo formed by the magic swirl that lifts up her hair and contains it, then culminates in a circle.

The fairy godmother, a somewhat chubby, but not very exaggerated, figure, enhances some pedagogical patterns already

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established in the film before she appears. Her temporary lack of awareness concerning Cinderella's physical attractiveness shows that she, like Cinderella, is a "good" woman. Her one very exaggerated feature is not physical, but mental: her absent-mindedness. This quality, along with her short stature, weak chin, and chubbiness, softens her role as a powerful female. In addition, her supernatural quality allows her to have power--and to be single--yet still positive.[11] These qualities are also modified by her role as a surrogate mother, encouraging the girl's sweet, hopeful nature (while pleased that Lucifer's appetite for Gus is foiled by her magic) and concerned that her "child" go to the ball--and so find a mate. She also functions as a restrainer, setting time limits on the young woman and creating her glass slipper--shoes without the natural give of leather.

Cinderella steps outside of her constraints only rarely in the film, and then only in response to unfair abuse. Even then her anger is either quickly dissipated by the idea of romance or it occurs in the cause of romance. Just before a messenger appears with a copy of the King's command that "all eligible maidens" must attend the ball to honor his son, Cinderella seems about to explode. Lucifer had just left dirty pawprints all over the newly washed floor, and she had taken off after him, proclaiming she would teach him "a lesson," when the messenger arrives. This harbinger of romance somewhat diffuses Cinderella's temper, yet she still mildly mocks her step family, whose poor rendition of "Sing, Sweet Nightingale" screeches in the background, by saying to the mice, "Shall we interrupt the, uh, music lesson?" Her mild anger, however, provides a clear contrast to her stepmother's barely controlled volcano of anger and hatred. When Cinderella does interrupt the "music lesson," the older woman, who was in the process of lecturing her daughters about control, violently bangs on the piano keys and yells at Cinderella. The stepmother's temper, coupled with her desire for power, keep her from

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having a close relationship with anyone in the film. She never even speaks directly to Lucifer, and only commands or manipulates her daughters. The filmmakers thus provide a caveat for their filmgoers: female power and anger yield isolation.

Cinderella's anger explodes only once, when her step mother locks her up, and she is cut off from her chance to fit into the glass slipper and so accept the Prince's offer of marriage. Gus the mouse is about to deliver the key when Lucifer covers both with a bowl. In desperation, Cinderella calls for the birds to "Get Bruno," the hound who had been her father's. (The one scene in which her father appears occurs by the garden fountain and includes the hound, his horse, Cinderella, and two bluebirds.) She knows that Bruno's cat-hating instinct, which she had earlier tried to quell in the interest of his keeping a warm bed inside, will lead him to dispatch Lucifer. Yet Cinderella is merely a catalyst here. The violent rescue is accomplished by Bruno, her father's representative,[12] who snaps at the stepmother's pet until he leaps out the turret window, falling to certain death.[13] The film therefore maintains that the good woman, Cinderella, is innocent of direct aggression--although she acknowledges its necessity--much like she is not sexually aggressive, yet she is aware of physical attractiveness. Both are very narrow paths to follow, but divergence from them leads to sad fates which the film encourages its viewers to approve.

In order to accomplish what was considered by many to be a positive goal of renewing family values, post-World War II cultural arbiters such as Walt Disney showed the need to limit women's scope and ambition, ambition fueled by economic and personal advances made during the war, as well as by the war-time mass media's positive images of strong women in the work force, such as Rosie the Riveter.[14] As Molly Haskell points out, during the post-war period, films about attractive "career girls" dramatically declined. Instead the popular media frequently

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depicted women with drive and skill as usurping men's roles and men's jobs; "good women" were those like Cinderella who were contained physically and emotionally within a home sphere,[15] passion being allowed only in defense of one's right to marriage and a family.

And so Cinderella leads its viewers to be judgmental watchers, whose main criterion is how characters conform to strict gender roles, roles which, when fulfilled, yield love and economic success. Those with exaggerated, sometimes overly mobile extremities remain outside heterosexual relationships, drawing only laughter or disdain from the audience, not envy or desire. Visual and sound cues admit no room for the viewers to doubt what is proper, reward-worthy behavior and what is not. This 1950 film offers no valorization of a single mother with a tendency to command and a yen for wealth through her own manipulations rather than through romance. Such strong, wordless lessons as those offered by this film would set the tone for the dominant culture in the 1950s. But the influence continues today. In 1988, 7.5 million videos of Cinderella were sold,[16] and all major video outlets carry a copy of the film. Anastasia's and Drizella's butts still collide, birds still sing in their mated happiness, the boy mice still cringe after their hug, and Cinderella still slips her foot into the see-through slipper before the Prince's carriage carries her to her nest.

NOTES

1. For a good overview of how films visually communicate meaning, see Wollen.

2. Smoodin points out that Disney's Cinderella disappointed The Saturday Review's film reviewer, who bemoans "an unusually large number of human characters," as well as a writer for Time who dislikes the film's drawing main characters with "an attempt at literal likeness" (106). This latter writer includes the stepmother along with Cinderella and the Prince as non-caricatured characters, while I do not.

3. Cinderella's outdoor scenes are limited to her brief transitions between homes (to and from the castle, and from her wedding at church to her home with the Prince), one yard scene when she feeds the animals, and the three garden scenes, in which she always has protectors (her father, her fairy godmother, and the Prince).

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Disney's Alice in Wonderland was produced about the same time as Cinderella (completed shortly before Cinderella but released the year after) and reveals a similar cultural slant. While the film is set almost totally outdoors, it differs from Lewis Carroll's original text in that it focuses on the heroines desire for a secure home.

4. I am indebted to Hansen's article for this insight.

5. Freud, for example, notes in "Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious" that humor can allow individuals to reveal aggression in a socially approved mode. Lorenz acknowledges the "insider" and "outsider" aspect of humor in terms of aggression, noting that laughter evokes a "strong fellow feeling among participants and joint aggressiveness against outsiders," yet he claims that laughter "always remains obedient to reason" (293-94). Boskin rightly critiques Lorenz's "optimism," especially because people often laugh at stereotypes, those absurd, mechanical, non-human entities established within a culture through verbal and/or visual repetition and which encourage a belief in pre-ordained hierarchy. While Boskin's analysis concerns racial stereotypes, it is also applicable to stereotypes about gender roles.

Disney had extensive experience with using animated films for pedagogical and propaganda purposes during World War II and frequently employed laughable stereotypes to achieve his ends. Richard Shale, in Donald Duck Joins Up, asserts that "the influence of Disney's wartime entertainment features would...be seen in the structure and technique of the postwar films" (109).

6. For a discussion of exaggeration being linked with transgressive behavior and lower class status, see Fiske. While Cinderella's step sisters, the locus of much of the film's exaggeration, are not actually lower class, their behavior is depicted as uncultured and uncultivated, unlike Cinderella's.

7. Voyeurism and the female body have been a main concern of film and art criticism for nearly two decades. Some useful discussions about audience participation in voyeurism can be found in Mulvey, Berger, Modlesku, and Doane.

8. Although animation does not use actual shots, such as close-ups, I have used commonly understood film terminology throughout this essay to discuss techniques which mimic the look of live-action film.

9. In the Perrault version, which the Disney film claims as its source, the King is married and the Queen sits next to him at the ball.

10. Smoodin points out that in 1950, John Mason Brown of The Saturday Review complained about Cinderella's female form, claiming that "Mr. Disney's Cinderella...is a blank-faced blonde, armed Al Capp-a-pie with the allurements of Daisy Mae" (112). While I don't see Cinderella as being in the Daisy Mae category, she definately has a larger bust than Snow White in the 1938 Disney film. Overall, she is more "human" and three-dimensional than Snow White.

11. Trites points out that before the 1970s, Disney's villainesses were "emaciated" and corpulence was not associated with evil (150). She also notes that Disney's feature-length fairy tales erase positive, strong figures of human females, leaving only servants or the superhuman, such as the fairy godmother.

12. While the Perrault Cinderella depicts Cinderella's father as being dominated by his evil wife and aware of her cruelty to his daughter, the father in the Disney version remains innocent and loving, the stepmother's true nature only showing about the time of his death.

13. Disney films frequently have villains fall to their deaths, thus lessening the guilt of the good characters who cause the falls.

14. For historical/cultural discussions of women's roles in the World

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War II and post-war eras, see Scott and Pleck (528-541), Woloch (461-474), Thomas (1-20), and Berkin. Van Horn provides a useful analysis of the post-war rise in fertility.

15. Harvey, as well as Haskell, discuss images of women in film during the post-war era. For an anlysis of images of women in film during the war years, see Baker.

16. Flower, 225.

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